

CLAIMS

1. A content delivery system for delivering content to a client of a user who possesses at least two clients, each of said clients using content legitimately based on an acquired license, said content delivery system comprising:

registering means for registering each of said clients of said user in order to acquire customer-related information;

customer-related information managing means for managing said customer-related information;

content providing means which, in response to a request from any one of said clients, provides content to the requesting client;

first license granting means which, in response to a request from the client having acquired the content from said content providing means, grants said requesting client a license for the acquired content; and

second license granting means which, after said user has moved the content from one client to another in the possession of the same user, grants said user a license for the moved content.

2. A content delivery system according to claim 1,

wherein said customer-related information managing means manages a table of correspondences between leaf ID's and client ID's, a table of correspondences between client ID's and user ID's, a table of correspondences between content ID's and license ID's, a table of correspondences between user ID's and the content ID's of downloaded content, and a table of correspondences between user ID's and the license ID's of downloaded licenses.

3. A content delivery system according to claim 1, wherein said customer-related information managing means updates said customer-related information every time said content providing means provides content to a client and/or any one of said first and said second license granting means grants a license to a client.

4. A content delivery system according to claim 1, wherein, in response to a request from a client for a license, said second license granting means acquires the requested license from said first license granting means and returns the acquired license to the requesting client.

5. A content delivery system according to claim 4, wherein said second license granting means, by querying said customer-related information managing means, verifies that said requesting client is legitimate, that the same user possessing said requesting client is in

possession of another client registered with said first license granting means, and that the requested license has already been granted to said another client by said first license granting means.

6. A content delivery system according to claim 1, further comprising fee-charging means for performing a fee-charging process regarding the client to which a license has been granted.

7. A content delivery system according to claim 5, wherein said fee-charging means makes a difference in charges between a case in which said first license granting means grants a license to a client downloading content, and a case in which said second license granting means grants a license to another client of the same user in possession of said downloading client.

8. An information processing apparatus for using content, comprising:

content downloading means for downloading content;

content storing means for storing content;

content moving means for moving the content stored in said content storing means to an external destination or for moving externally acquired content into said content storing means;

license acquiring means for acquiring a license for

using content; and

content reproducing means for legitimately using content based on the acquired license.

9. An information processing method for using content, comprising the steps of:

downloading content;

storing content;

moving the content stored in said content storing step to an external destination or moving externally acquired content into storage;

acquiring a license for using content; and

legitimately using content based on the acquired license.

10. A computer program which is described in a computer-readable format and which allows a computer system to grant a user a license for using content, said user possessing at least two clients which use content legitimately based on acquired licenses, said computer program comprising:

a first step of determining whether or not a client of said user requesting a license is legitimate;

a second step of determining whether or not said user possessing the requesting client is also in possession of another client to which said license has

already been granted; and

a third step of granting the same license to said requesting client if the determination in the second step provides an affirmative result.